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## III.—PAVON.

The peacock is proverbial for his beautiful tail and his ugly feet. *Hacer la rueda* to spread the tail (in the form of a wheel) has two metaphorical meanings: 1) to flatter, 2) to boast, and *deshacer la rueda* to close the tail is figurative for losing one's pride. As the tail is a cause of pride, so the ugly feet are of shame. Hence the metaphor *mirarse los piés* y *deshacer la rueda*, to see one's own defects and lose one's pride.

Si esto haces vendrá á *ser feos piés de la rueda de tu locura* la consideracion de haber guardado puercos en tu tierra. D. Q., II. 42.—Mirate los piés y desharás la rueda, Berganza. Col. de los perros, p. 332 (ed. Brockh.).—Desesperóse el poeta con la resoluta respuesta de Auristela, *miróse á los piés de su ignorancia*, y *deshizo la rueda* de su vanidad y locura. Pers. y Sig., p. 626. John Bowle, in his note on D. Q., II. 42, quotes the following instances: Mirando como el pavon la cosa mas fea que en tí tienes, luego desharás la rueda de tu vanidad. Fray Luis de Granada.

Italian: Paone molto ha a dispetto la laidezza de' suoi piedi. Brun. Lat., l. 5, c. 33.

Compare the French *faire la queue*, *faire la roue* with the sense of *pavaner*.

The Italian *guastare la coda al pavone* means to spoil a joke: *Io me ne crepava della risa, e per non guastar la coda al pavone mi ritirai verso la credenza fingendo vedere ciò che vi si faceva.* M. Bandello (Raccolta di Nov. Ital. Firenze, 1833. t. I. p. 306).

*Pavonada* means 1) the short, slow walk of the peacock (cf. gallo), 2) his strutting, stately walk. Viéndome tan galan soldado, dí ciertas *pavonadas* por Toledo. Guz. de Alf., p. 232.

*Pavonear* denotes 1) to strut, 2) to entertain with false hopes.

The turkey is the picture of pride:

Ponfale tan lleno de plumas como si fuera *pavo real*. Don. Habl., p. 509.

Me ponía mas hueco y pomposo que un *pavon indiano*. Esteb. Gonz., p. 291.

De toma un pavo á daca un pavo van dos pavos.

*Pavo* by metaphor means fop and *pava* an inactive, indolent woman.

*Pelar la pava*, to pluck the turkey-hen, is an

expression for courting, characteristic of Spanish customs:

El hablar quiere gracia

Y el cantar brio

Y *el pelar la pavia*

Quiere sentido. Lafuente, Cancion., I. 231, 3, quoted by Marin, Cantos., II. p. 416.

Náide *pela la paba*,

Porque está bisto

Que de *pelar la paba*

Salen pabitos. Marin, l. s., II. 421.

¿Será bien hecho, decía yo para mí, el venir aquí á *pelar la pava* en las barbas de las benditas ánimas que padeciendo y espirando están? Fer. Cab., Fam. de Alv., p. 24.

Compare *pelar la grulla*, of which I have not been able to find an instance thus far.

P. Meyer (Questions sur le poème de la Croisade Albigeoise., Rom. IV. 275) remarks in regard to this expression: "En catalan on dit encore maintenant *pelar la grua*, dans le sens de 'faire la cour.' Il est probable qu'il y a au fond de la locution catalane comme de celle de notre texte (*pelar la pera*) l'idée de perdre le temps."

Most likely *pelar la pava* meant at first the talk carried on by persons while occupied in the tedious work of plucking a turkey-hen, then the equally insignificant chat of lovers through the iron grate of the windows, and finally the courting itself. In a similar way, though taking a different line of thought, the German *nicht viel federlesens machen* denotes in the first place "to lose no time by picking feathers," then "not to tarry" and "to use no ceremonies."

*Andallo*, *pavas* expresses satisfaction with what is seen or heard.

*Moco de pavo*, the turkey's crest, is a) a name of the amaranth. (cf. cresta de gallo) and b) an expression for something worthless: ¿Es moco de pavo? Do you call that nothing?—Con que mucho cuidado, que mis consejos no son *moco de pavo*. Galdós, 7 de julio, c. 6.

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## HUNT'S ENGLISH PROSE.

It is not my purpose in this article to undertake a critical review of Professor Hunt's suggestive and instructive book. That task has already been accomplished, and it would be a

work of supererogation, if not of presumption, to repeat it. My object is rather to submit some reflections or deductions in regard to the general question of English prose style, especially the later developments of that style. First of all, Professor Hunt's work reveals the range and amplitude of his subject, the complex influences, moral, social, classical, constitutional, which have modified and determined its growth. Rich fields lie still unexplored; our literary historians concentrate their energies principally upon biographical details, impressive delineations and comprehensive generalizations, ignoring in large measure those specific agencies whose action has in each era of our literary evolution, colored and moulded the character of our prose. We must accurately discriminate between prose style and prose literature, for the history of our literature has been elaborately wrought out by Morley and other specialists, who for the most part disregard the changes in the form and structure of that very medium whose literary achievements they are recounting. Saintsbury and Minto have given us pictures of individual authors, their peculiar or distinctive features, rather than a continuous and systematic history of the origin and expansion of English prose.

A marked defect in nearly all our current manuals is a failure to perceive the continuity of our prose style, and the very early period at which many of its characteristic and permanent features were assumed. The Anglo-Saxon gospels reveal the future form of our Biblical prose; the prototype of Wycliffe and Tyndale is there, and for eight or nine centuries its elements have been modified or developed in accordance with the spirit and genius impressed upon them by the earliest translators. There have been no violent or radical changes, simply progression in perfect harmony with its original and primal character.

The majority of our literary historians seem to disregard the fact that the periodic prose style of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the so-called classical type of Hooker, Milton, Browne, Taylor, is rather engrafting of a foreign influence upon the language, than the expansion of the language in accordance with its native tendencies. This proposition is

demonstrated by the circumstance that beneath the superstructure of periodic or classical syntax lies the germ of our modern typical prose in the popular literature of the Elizabethan age, in its pamphlets, its novelettes, in its euphuistic affectation, which are a clear preluding of our concise prose style; in the prose dialogues and soliloquies of the drama; in the political tracts of Sir Walter Raleigh, which in *modernness* of tone will scarcely suffer by comparison with the latest deliverances of Mr. Gladstone. Our historians introduce us to the later or Addisonian prose form as if it were developed by a magical process out of pre-existing materials, the periodic style being uprooted or superseded in some mysterious and inexplicable fashion. The rise of our later or modern prose, is but the assertion of the consciousness of our speech, the specific influence that impelled it being easily traceable in the social, constitutional, and scientific development of England during the latter half of the seventeenth century. The modern spirit was vigorously expressing itself in the growth of religious and political toleration, in the unfolding of physical science, in the establishment of constitutionalism as one of the beneficent results of the revolution of 1688. The manifestation of the modern impulse as seen in our prose is merely one phase of a coördinate movement; it may be as distinctly noted in the *Principia*, and in the graceful maturing of the heroic couplet, as in the transition from the style of Milton to the style of Addison. In the failure to trace out by logical and scientific method the rise of our modern prose form, to make clear the fact that it was in vigorous existence from the earliest stage of our linguistic growth, that it was in great measure superseded for at least a century by a style largely exotic in character, being modelled upon classical prototypes, and that at a period when all dominant influences were acquiring a modern color and character it asserted itself, and polished and perfected by the labors of a school of critics scarcely inferior in assiduity and affectionate zeal to those who refashioned the unregulated vernacular of Elizabethan days, entered into its present state, all our historians have sinned and come short. Yet the subject is one whose complex

fascination would seem irresistible to the student of our literary evolution. In estimating the position of Macaulay as a master of prose, Professor Hunt, it appears, is too much inclined to ignore the fact that all art need not have an ethical import; that literary art may be pursued as an end unto itself, as a supreme gratification of the æsthetic nature, a "wreaking of the thought upon expression." It is happy for the race that this is true, or literary form might be sacrificed to mere moralizing, intolerable platitude, or speedily enter into eclipse with the extending range and influence of the normal philological diction. Indeed, Macaulay is the legitimate product of the artistic training received by our language during the Augustan day, a training whose salutary impress has sufficed in seasons of revolution or violent transition to guard against mere wantonness, to avert a Saturnalia of style.

The relation of our modern poetic writers to the school of "prose poets," is a subject that cannot fail to tempt the enthusiastic student of our later literary development.

The attitude of John Henry Newman with regard to the school of poets contemporary with his youthful period, might form the subject of a fascinating and suggestive chapter. We know from the cardinal's own statement, that he was never "soaked in Wordsworth as were some of his contemporaries." The relation of Frederick Robertson to Tennyson is evident at a glance. No writer of prose has ever more perfectly caught and reflected the inspiration of a contemporary poet. His sermons are not unfrequently radiant with passages of genuine poetic power; sometimes he transfuses the characteristic touches of Tennyson into a prose-poetry not inferior, save in the lack of the artistic drapery of metrical form, to the noblest and most ornate utterances of the Laureate. We readily understand the skill and brilliancy that marked his analysis of 'In Memoriam.' The deep poetic vein that characterizes these two masters of pulpit eloquence, Newman and Robertson, render them the subject of especial interest, for in some passages the poetic coloring is almost identical, the similitudes seem not the mere echoes of each

other, but the same simple thought in either is transfigured by a brilliance of poetic gilding which is an inspiration to the æsthetic sense, and a supreme delight to the spiritual nature. In them the artistic function and the ethical motive which Professor Hunt denies to Macaulay, blend into a graceful harmony.

It is to be observed that historians of our prose literature fail to take into consideration the rise of the modern novel as in a great measure the successor of the seventeenth century drama. The intellectual energy employed in the creation of the drama has been in a degree conserved, and we may add, correlated, in the modern novel of life and character, which during the earlier part of the eighteenth century began to supersede the fantastic romance of the olden time. There is here a clearly ascertained relation between the drama as a poetic form, and the novel as the development and the expression of a new phase of prose literature, which is worthy of a critical and minute investigation. The realism of the drama passes into the realism of the novel; since its expansion most of our dramatic activity has been fitful and transient, though some of its creations may have been brilliant.

Professor Hunt's book is a series of delightful pictures, individual portraits charming to contemplate, whether exhibiting the gnarled ruggedness of Carlyle, the golden symphonies of Taylor, the rhetorical brilliance of De Quincey or of Burke, the malignant cynicism of Swift, or the harmless cynicism and the tempered grace of Addison. The history of our prose evolution, executed in accordance with the most vigorous methods that modern science has wrought out, is yet to be written. Let us hope that above all the subject may be so developed as to exhibit its *unity*. We may admit with Bishop Stubbs that in the sphere of historic growth solutions of continuity occur, but in the expansion of our literary life, while conceding the full play and vigorous activity of foreign and external influences, we can discover in perhaps one instance alone a summing of the golden cord that binds its extremes together.

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